

THE SKIRT OF DEMOCRACY

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BEN HOLLIDAY'S NOSE.

Ben's Ride Across the Plains.—His Nose Itches and a Kind Stranger Scratches It.

While traveling across the great prairie recently in company of some veterans, old Ben Holliday, suddenly became unusually comical. He finished the Rocky Mountain stage through the great Gold Belt, full of miners, the Black Canyon of the Colorado, dashed in the Deep Valley, crossed granite in the Yellowstone regions, scurried down the Salmon Falls, and laid a score of miles so skillfully that the hair of his horse's mane stood upright. One of his yarns was both startling and true.

"One night," said one, "long before the Pacific railroad was built, I was bouncing over the plains in one of my overland coaches. My wife was with me. She was sick, and lay asleep on the bottom of the stage on a bed of buffalo skins. The night was fearfully dark, and a drenching rain was falling. Mr. Holliday and myself were the only passengers. Several stages had been robbed within two months, and the driver was taping along as though a gang of bandits were after him. Suddenly the horses gave themselves up their harnesses, and the stage stopped. I was heaved forward, but quickly recovered, and found myself seated at the muzzle of a double-barreled shotgun. Then the dim light of the stage lights the barrels looked like bugle-horns. 'Drawn up your hands, and don't stir,' shouted the owner in a gruff voice. 'Up went my hands and I began to commune with myself.' The fellow damned my soul, and then could speak for my money. I saw that he did not know who I was, and I was afraid that my side might accidentally kill my wife. 'My coat is buttoned every button, but it won't hold,' said the desperado, who had a pistol which cost over \$8,000 a few weeks before. 'I am a gambler. I am dry located. I have no friends. The lightning might strike the stage, and the blinding brilliant attract the attention of the robber. I had about \$40,000 in a money belt, plus \$10,000, and several hundred dollars in my pocket.'

"Suddenly my friend spoke. 'Come, shell out,—quick, or I'll send the devil a free lunch.'"

"I passed out a few hundred loose in my pocket, and handed him my gold watch and chain. They were heavy, I think the mechanism would weigh five pounds at least."

"There," said I, "there's every cent I've got. Take it, and let me go on."

"My wife is very sick, and I don't know what would happen to her if she knew what was going on."

"Keep your hands up," was the reply, while a second robber received the watch and money. Then a search was made for the express company's box, but the double-barreled shotgun did not move. Its主人 was within a shout of me now. For my life I did not dare to stir. My nose began to itch. The stiff hairs of my moustache got up, one after another, and tickled it until the sensation was intolerable. I could stand it no longer, and said:

"Stranger, I cried, 'I must scratch my nose.' It itches so that I am almost crazy."

"Move your hands, he shouted, and I'll throw a hole through your head big enough for a jack rabbit to jump through." I appealed once more. "Well," he answered, "keep your hands still, and I'll scratch it for you. I hate to see a partner suffer."

"Do be scratch it," asked one of Ben's interested listeners.

"One," said Mr. Holliday.

"How," asked the breathless listener.

"With the muzzle of the cocked gun, said the great overlander. "He rubbed the muzzle around my moustache, and raked it over the end of my nose until I thanked him and said that it itched no longer."

The robbers soon afterward took their leave, with many apologies, and Ben continued his journey to the Missouri with the big emerald and \$40,000.

Stepping the Interest.

Daniel Webster once dined with an old Boston merchant, and when he came to the wine a dusty old bottle was carefully decanted by John, and past to the host. Taking the bottle, he poured out Mr. Webster's glass and handed it to him. Their pouring one another glass for himself, he held it to the light, and said:

"How you like it, Mr. Webster?"

"I think it is a fine specimen of old port."

"Now can you guess what it cost me?" said the host.

"Surely not," said Mr. Webster. "I only know that it is excellent."

"Well, now, I can tell you, for I made a careful estimate the other day. When I add the interest to the first price, I find that it costs me just one dollar and twenty-five cents per glass."

"Good gracious, you don't say so!" said Mr. Webster, and then drinking his glass he presented it again, with the remark:

"Fill it up again as quick as you can, for I want to stop that confounded interest."

Bismarck seems to want England to knock a chip off Germany's shoulder.

The Georgia Legislature is considering a law prohibiting the selling of tobacco to minors.

The fellow that went out rabbit hunting without success, but on his return bought a stale one at the market, was told by his wife when she got a sniff at it, that he had done well, for it was high time that that rabbit was killed.

A young man just engaged on a ranch in Truckee, California, was set to driving a team of cattle, and at noon, when he wanted to feed them, was observed trying to uncover their horns in order to get the yoke off the animals.

Mark Twain says that nothing seems to please a fly so much as to be mistaken for a huckleberry, and if it can be believed it will palm off on the unwary as a curant, it flies happy.

It has been found by experiment at Milan that at a distance of one thousand and miles, the telephone can transmit spoken words in a soft tone, and that the tone of the voice can be distinguished.

"Every drop hem I drank paid du tv, milder." "Well, what of it?" said his wife, as she pulled off his boots.

"The mother, and I a (one) duty husband?" She concluded we was—

Cincinnati Saturday Night.

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